



CHALLENGES OF TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO THE TRIBAL SPHERE

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ABSTRACT

India is a diverse nation with distinctiveness and is a developing nation in the areas of science and technology, IT, Commerce, Aviation, etc but still the tribal children who are addressed the gifted; throughout the nation face the age-old challenges in learning English. Ample factors stand as a reason for this awful and appalling situation where the tribal population is profusion to India but unfortunately they are still deprived of proper education and are underprivileged. There are numerous talented graduates from tribal areas but owing to a lack of communication skills their traits are suppressed. The major reason for this is a lack of motivation. The graduates from these areas face many difficulties and predicaments in comprehending the language since their schooling and foundation was fully influenced by their mother tongue. Students who are good at core subjects are not able to communicate and miss good opportunities in cities. Currently, besides their knowledge in the core subjects, communication skills are a must to let the world witness their traits and give a chance for them to testify. The reasons for lack of communication skills among the students, lack of interest and motivation among the teachers in tribal areas are discussed and suggested some solutions to this problem.

INTRODUCTION:

An Arab proverb says, " Learning a language avoids war" which asserts the significance of mastering a foreign language. 400 million people across the globe speak English and are the official language of 53 countries. It is also called the Library language and the language of Science, Aviation, and Tourism. If you know English you can know the world better. ELT in India is more than two centuries old and still, our students falter and foul-up in learning and construing the language. (Chattaraj Dishari pg: 2). The government comes up with slogans and displays their empathetic perspective towards tribal development but in reality, tribal development and empowerment are a more pressing question. When the tribal children are educated only then we will be able to witness better lives.

WHY CHILDREN IN TRIBAL REGIONS LACK COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND WHY DO WE STILL WITNESS DROPOUTS?

In this competitive arena, besides academic traits, one should possess sound communication skills to testify or corroborate. Indian tribal population is the world's largest but unfortunately, we still witness the same old problems right from their lifestyle without proper education we cannot expect anybody to evolve. Before we talk about skills, we ought to know the fact that they are even deprived of education. Though some children join the schools are hardly expected to continue as most of them are dropouts. There are ample reasons for this problem. Majorly, the background of unawareness among the residents of tribal milieu, lack of motivation among the students and teachers, parents who wish to send their children to work rather than to school owing to lack of awareness and regular absenteeism among teachers are some of the reasons that make them discontinue their primary education. On the other side, teachers are less motivated to take classes properly. Another significant reason is that many tribal languages do not have a script. So, the child feels very difficult to comprehend the English language. The tendency to stay away from the outside world is one of the reasons (Arunima.S Challenges of English language in tribal milieu pg"232). As Priya Kriti Kajur and Dhanya Krishnan cited the quote of Roy in their "Analysis of English language outcomes among tribal students of class VIII of GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS OF Gumla Dist, Jharkhand that "tribal children are trapped in an intergeneration vicious cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and deprivation due to their primitive native and they remain isolated from the mainstream of life and other strata of society". One important reason for their inability to comprehend the language is they learn their mother tongue in a natural context but in learning, they miss this natural context and hence they feel difficulty. The known fact is that the language of English as L2 is taught akin to Mathematics right from numbers 1 2 3 in English the teachers teach alphabets first repudiating the order of LSRW.

One of the reasons is the variation of family culture and a school culture that has impeded for a long time. Where the school culture tries to foster the children the family background dissuades them. The repercussion is persistent illiteracy that remains forever (Wahid Ahman Dar and Irshad Ahmad Nazar 2017).

DO WE HAVE MOTIVATED TEACHERS?

Recently, the NAAC in its visit to one of the Degree colleges in the Paderu region ran smack into a bitter experience where a teacher who was not trained in English was teaching the language in the mother tongue. This incident brought to light the condition of schools and colleges in the tribal vicinity and with this instance; we can expect the same situation prevailing in the other schools and colleges too. Numerous children are stymied by those kinds of teachers who stand as one of

the reasons for the demotivation among tribal students. Nevertheless, there are some reasons for the lack of motivation among teachers. Most of the teachers are forced to work in tribal areas paradoxical to their wishes (Dr.Mahima Goutham Pg: 4), and some show their disinterest in students and teaching approaches that victimizes the students. Many types of research and studies tell us that the pivotal part lies in the hands of the teacher and hence he/she ought to be empathetic towards one's pupil and should be paid well. The remuneration aspect is an inevitable thing and when the teachers are paid well we can expect dedication and compassion too among them. Besides this, teachers should be made to attend some training sessions where their duties should be taught again and again which will result in optimistic alterations in their outlook. Until the teacher is compassionate and commiserative no matter how much amount is spent by the Governments on the tribal development it goes in vain.

ARE THE SCHOOLS MONITORED?

The experience of the NAAC in Paderu College alerts us that the colleges and schools are to be monitored regularly. If not we need to experience many such bitter things in the coming years. Already the world is heading with jet speed but here in these regions of tribal locale we still witness children deprived of education. Supervisory officers like DEO, MEO should monitor and supervise on regular basis and should try to interact with the children and test them how far they can learn the subjects. These kinds of sudden visits of officers are always a good sign and the teachers shall be meticulous in fulfilling their duties. Schools are provided grants under Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and other such schemes but regrettably, many schools aren't properly utilizing them. For instance, we can hardly find televisions in schools, and if at all they are found they wouldn't be in working condition. There is a digital class facility named MANA BADI in which the students can learn watching television which is quite fascinating to children but we can hardly witness proper use of this facility.

WHAT ARE THE METHODS IN WHICH ENGLISH IS TAUGHT TO TRIBAL PUPIL AND WHY ARE THEY NOT MOTIVATED?

There are many methods since the Grammar Translation Method where the teachers have been trying their best to make the students feel comfortable with the learning of language. Though there are many loopholes in every method there are certain advantages too with every method. But in urban areas, most of the teachers possess sound technical knowledge and they make use of audiovisual aids, charts boards, realia, etc to the maximum extent. Whereas the tribal area teachers are considered many of the teachers lack interest in acquiring the skills and technical knowledge and there are some reasons too for this disinterest were discussed in the above. In this tribal vicinity, we hardly find teachers who adopt the new approaches of teaching as it not favors the pupil but also it enhances their abilities. Mostly, we witness GTM in which the teachers in these areas teach as it is a cakewalk for them but in reality, it is a kind of dictator-like teaching and it is highly teacher-centered. Due to this method, the lessons too are being taught to students in their mother tongue and there is hardly any chance to learn the language. The teacher plays a significant role in motivating the students irrespective of the region. Here, the Governments should know the significance of emphasizing workshops and should try to inculcate empathetic perspectives among the teachers. They should be taught the importance of myriad teaching methods and approaches and they should also be taught how important technical skills are these days.

One of the best things is when the tribal children are made and felt local while teaching English half of the job is done. For this, we should take some instances from their own culture and by narrating the stories of indigenous people, and by incorporating those in the syllabi to some extent we can create interest among them (Anuja Mohan Pradhan 2019).

The paper titled "Tribal Folklore as ELT Material for First-Generation Learners" by K. Viswanath and Seemita Mohanty discussed the way, tribal children are privileged to have one of the best government schemes named ANWESHA which is meant exclusively for the below poverty line STs in the state of Odisha. This was initiated in 2015 by the then state government this was meant to make the tribal children join the public schools of English medium located in cities. The government bears all the expenses right from residential facilities, medical expenses, books, uniforms, and school fees. This was the government wants to fulfill the dreams of tribal parents who are under BPL. Unfortunately, this scheme too has faced some difficulties in reality and implementation. In a study of NCERT, it found that the beneficiaries of the scheme who were very motivated and zealous in the initial stage were found to lack of motivation owing to numerous reasons. The major reason was they came across some difficulties in coping with their urban classmates who were fast in comprehending the language and their performance in all the four language skills was very poor. A similar kind of test was conducted on the non-beneficiaries of the scheme and that yielded better results in all the four language skills. Post-test a meeting was arranged, where all the teachers contentious about the motivation levels of the students. They opined the students were very motivated and passionate in the beginning but the later stages due to the unfair competition from the urban settled learners and the unfamiliar content in the textbooks dissipated their zeal. To prevent this kind of bitter experience, the governments should come up with syllabi where the students find a locale and can relate to themselves. For instance, there certain festivals which are seen in the tribes, and also there are many great freedom fighters and other legendary personalities in India who are ever-inspiring to the nation, hence their biographies also should be incorporated in the textbooks. By following these simple things it is possible to make the students maintain the same passion for learning the language.

WHY DO TEACHERS LACK MOTIVATION?

There are numerous reasons for this lack of motivation among teachers. Firstly, the lack of interest in teaching the tribes as the tribes easily won't construe as many tribal languages lack script. The other is many teachers are bribed and are appointed in the tribal areas and hence they show their dissatisfaction with students. There are some instances which corroborate the insensitive perception of the teachers who are appointed in the tribal areas like Araku and Paderu here in the city of Visakhapatnam.

Unless the teachers take their profession passionately as a challenge we can hardly create any interest among the learners. Many teachers accept the job by a force which causes adverse effect (Dr. Mahima Gautham Pg: 3). Many studies and researches tell us that the major part lies in the hands of teachers. Hence, the teachers should be trying to be empathetic and sensitive towards the students and the teachers at the same time should be paid well as a good remuneration makes them feel content and they may become compassionate in their roles.

Another reason for the lack of motivation among the teachers in tribal areas is, when the class doesn't properly respond to the questions at a certain point of time any teachers feel exhausted and if the same thing continues the teacher loses his/her interest. There are some merit students but unfortunately, parents of such students aspire to join them in private schools than continuing in govt schools. However, if there are such merit pupils in a class even the teacher and the other students get motivated and we can see a better output (Wahid Ahman Dar and Irshad Ahmad Nazar 2017).

CONCLUSION:

According to the 2011 census report, the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes in the state of Andhra Pradesh has been 48.80% and the general population literacy rate has been 67.40%. Through this, we can easily construe the lesser growth of tribal literacy rates. The census of 2011 was akin to the 2001 census where the tribal literacy rate was lesser than the general population literacy rate which is perturbing. Even after a decade, we are unable to witness a better literacy rate in these regions. One way our nation is heading towards and progressing itself to attain the status of a developed nation and on the other side, we still have our gifted people facing the same difficulties to survive in this competitive domain.

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